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November 20, 2008

The Honorable Mary Peters
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Docket DOT-OST-2008-0252

Dear Secretary Peters:

I am writing to you regarding the recently proposed joint business agreement between American Airlines, British Airways and Iberia Airlines to cooperate on flights between North America and Europe, and their plans to expand global cooperation.

As the former President & CEO of NYC & Company, New York City's official tourism marketing organization, and as the CEO of Nicholas & Lence Communications, a New York City-based travel and tourism consulting firm representing a number of clients affected by this issue, I believe that there are benefits that such an alliance could offer the travel industry. Approval of this application for antitrust immunity would enable these oneworld alliance airlines that operate transatlantic service to work closely together while helping to ensure that customers continue to benefit from having three competitive air alliances. This alliance will have a positive impact on air travel by offering customers more service, scheduling and pricing options. Other benefits include more destinations available to travelers through connectivity of flights and even shorter travel times through coordination of flight transfers.

I understand that the ability of airlines to form an alliance are dependent on competition law prohibiting agreements or practices that restrict free trading and competition between business entities and banning abusive behavior by a firm dominating a market. While those factors are considered by federal authorities to assure that such an alliance meets US law and regulation, I ask that the Department of Transportation take into account the benefits of an enhanced airline industry competitive arena and the potential benefits to travelers and the travel industry as a whole.

Sincerely,



Cristyne L. Nicholas

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